

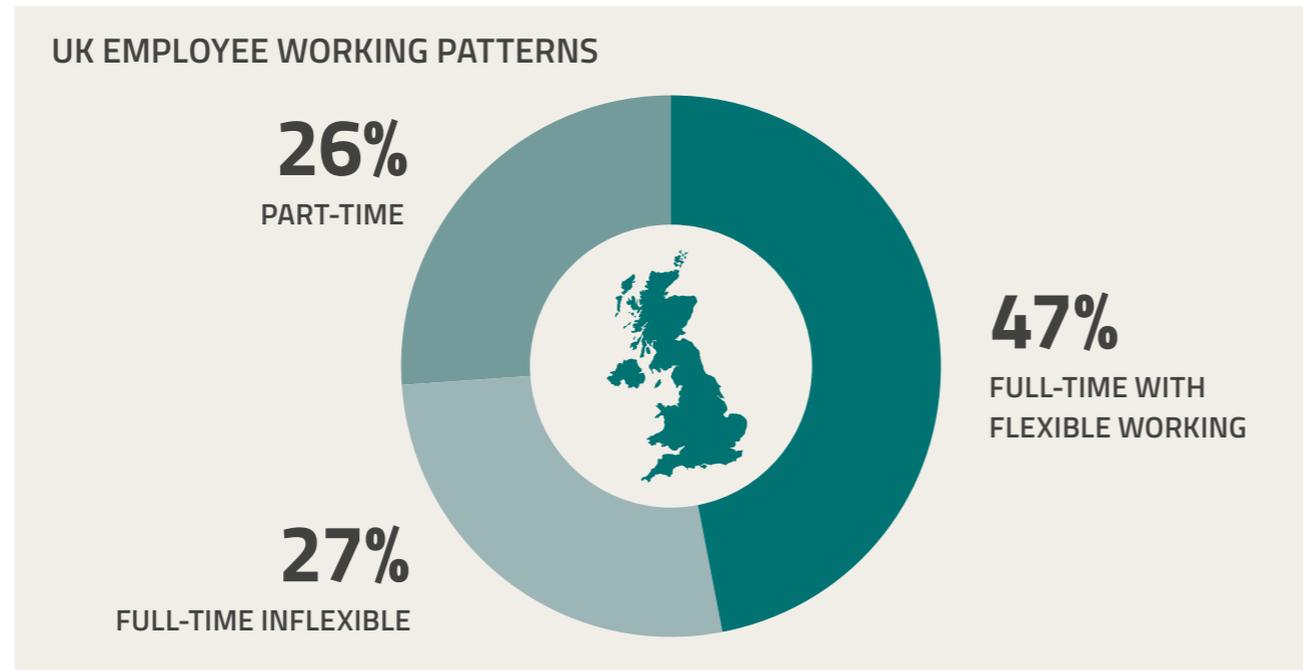
A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE: A modern workplace for a flexible workforce

In collaboration with:

Deloitte.

A CLEAR CASE FOR CHANGE

Our enduring social aim at Timewise is to enable women and men to find the flexibility they need in their careers without reducing their value in the workplace. Professional services firm Deloitte also shares this aim – providing a working environment where everyone is able to enjoy a successful career alongside a fulfilling life outside of work. It is this shared aim that has led Timewise and Deloitte to produce this manifesto for change.



For too long those who have needed to work fewer hours or work flexibly have faced career penalties because of a workplace that was designed for a family structure where one person stayed at home and another went out to work. However this traditional structure no longer represents the majority of UK households.

Companies that have focused on giving their employees greater flexibility in how, when and where they work have capitalised on attracting and keeping the best people. Flexible working is now the preferred way of working for a large proportion of both men and women across generations. This is shown by Timewise research from 2017 that finds that 7 in 10 (73 per cent) of the UK workforce currently work either part-time or full-time with some form of flexible working pattern¹. So the commercial rationale for enabling flexible working is clear.

Yet despite the compelling case for flexibility, employees say working this way can present challenges to their career progression.

The Timewise research also shows that while the desire to work flexibly is gender neutral, failing to address this has had a disproportionately negative impact on gender balance at senior levels in business in the UK.

¹ Flexible Working: A Talent Imperative, Timewise, 2017

BARRIERS EXIST

A new survey of just under 2,000 professionals working in the UK, conducted for this manifesto, shows that the biggest perceived barriers to flexible working include outdated workplace cultures and attitudes that perpetuate the “flexibility stigma”, and reveals a fear of challenging the status quo.

It’s clear that even when business leaders want to accommodate the flexible working needs of their employees – and even encourage it – there is a gap between what is said at the top and how that translates to everyday working life.

VIEWS OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK FLEXIBLY

39%

Believe that their job can’t be done flexibly

24%

Say their workplace culture is not supportive

17%

Feel unable to ask for flexible working because colleagues don’t work flexibly

17%

Believe that working flexibly would stop them from progressing

VIEWS OF FLEXIBLE WORKERS

30%

Feel they are regarded as having less status because they work flexibly

25%

Feel they are given access to fewer opportunities

28%

Feel disadvantaged because they are unable to attend work events outside working hours

25%

Say they have missed out on promotion

Source of statistics: Timewise 2017 survey of over 1800 UK professionals who work or want to work flexibly

THE SOLUTION

Respondents to our survey tell us that the barriers that exist to successfully embedding flexible working within an organisation are primarily cultural, including the attitudes and behaviours of managers.

Success requires going beyond just having a few policies and a solely programmatic approach – it needs to be about culture and modernising attitudes. Indeed, nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) said that having a workplace culture where people are judged on the work they do rather than the hours they put in, with managers who truly support their team to achieve work/life balance (70%), were the best

interventions an organisation could make. 60% also told us that a range of suitable flexible working options would make a positive difference.

With this in mind, we asked 12 business leaders and experts on flexible working what they and their organisations are doing to challenge the cultures, behaviours and perceptions that act as barriers to flexible working. Our in-depth interviews uncovered invaluable best practice, advice and suggestions.

At a personal level, they also show how leaders have an enormous power to affect a change in attitudes simply by acting as role models.

Both the survey respondents and our interviewees told us that real change only comes when leaders challenge workplace culture and practices that are no longer fit for purpose – when businesses recognise that the workplace needs to catch up with the needs and aspirations of a modern workforce, of today and tomorrow.

It's time for change. It's time for the workplace to adapt. Only then will we see lasting and meaningful change.

It's time for action.

WHAT THE WORKERS SAY

73%

Want a workplace culture where people are judged on the work they do rather than the hours they put in

70%

Say managers need to truly support their team to achieve work/ life balance

60%

Want access to a range of suitable flexible working options

Source: Timewise 2017 survey of over 1800 UK professionals who work or want to work flexibly

UK WORKPLACES NEED A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

This manifesto is not about the words leaders preach but about the everyday actions they need to take to enforce change. These range from small tweaks in behaviour to bolder initiatives. We want this to be a blueprint for attitudes and actions across UK businesses and organisations.

Our mission is to speed up culture change by sharing what UK employees say they need, and showing what has worked for those employers who have already committed to change. We want business leaders to share the best practice that has been proven to be effective, to recognise that getting this right will drive success in their business, and to be brave in trying new approaches.

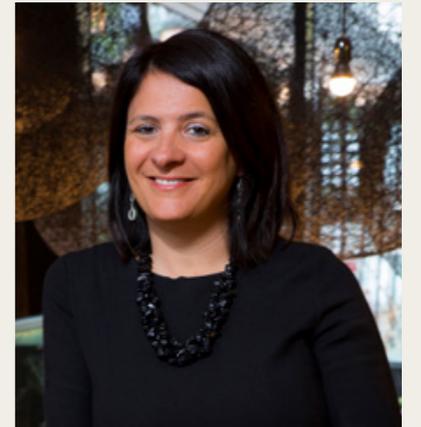


“The last four years have marked a huge change for our firm. Four years ago, staff were telling us they wanted better work-life balance despite us providing all the standard flexible working options you would expect from an employer of 17,000+. It was playing out in our retention and engagement data, particularly for our female employees. Today, the story is very different – we have a reputation for providing our people with the means to balance a great career with commitments outside work. Now, work-life balance is no longer the main reason people choose to leave our firm, people actually choose to join us because of our approach to agile working, and our people tell us they feel trusted

to decide when, where and how they work. We have achieved this change simply by focusing on our culture, and ensuring we offer people options that really work for them and the firm.”

Emma Codd - Managing Partner for Talent, Deloitte

“The first message most businesses give to women on diversity has all of the right sentiments - we want you, we want you to feel included, we don't want to lose you. However, the sub-message is the problem - this is the way things work around here. True inclusion means challenging structural as well as cultural norms. Changing how a business designs jobs, how they are advertised, and how creative they can be in thinking about how work and teams can be organised. Until we reward people for quality of output and not the volume of hours they input, we will keep coming up against the same diversity challenges.”



Karen Mattison - Joint CEO, Timewise

HOW WE IDENTIFIED THE KEY DEMANDS OF THE MANIFESTO

SURVEY OF FLEXIBLE WORKERS

To understand what the practical obstacles to flexible working are and how employees and leaders struggle with them, we commissioned a survey of professional women and men in the UK who work - or would like to work - flexibly. In practical terms, what did they feel was holding them back?

We received over 1,800 responses, of which 22% were in middle management, 14% in senior management and 26% in non-managerial professional roles. Nearly all respondents (92%) were female and the vast majority (74%) were in the 35-54 age bracket. Exactly three-quarters were university-educated. More than three-quarters (78%) said their current or most recent employer offered flexible working.

INTERVIEWS WITH PRO-FLEX BUSINESS LEADERS

We then used the survey data to inform our in-depth interviews with 12 UK business leaders across a range of industries, who are regarded as supportive of flexible working, to find out how they are tackling these issues. How are they trying to close the gap between leadership strategies that encourage flexible working and the everyday experience of employees who are working this way? How are they translating their words into action? What practical initiatives are working, and what are they struggling with most?



Karen Blackett
Chairwoman of
MediaCom and WPP's
UK Country Head



Fiona Cannon
Group Director of
Diversity and
Inclusion at Lloyds
Banking Group



**Miriam González
Durántez**
Partner at Dechert



Judy Greevy
Senior Talent &
HR Consultant



Keith Howells
Chairman of Mott
MacDonald



James Libson
Executive Partner at
Mischnon de Reya



Karen Mattison
Joint CEO of Timewise



Katie McQuaid
Director of Amazon
Marketplace UK



Janvi Patel
Co-founder of Halebury



Cilla Snowball
Group CEO and Group
Chairman of AMV BBDO



David Sproul
Senior Partner and
Chief Executive
at Deloitte



Emer Timmons
CMO of BrightStar

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE: A modern workplace for a flexible workforce

1.



LEADERS MUST PROVOKE CULTURAL CHANGE
CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO

2.



FLEXIBLE WORKING TO BE GENDER NEUTRAL
EMPHASISE THE VALUE OF MALE AND FEMALE ROLE MODELS

3.



DESIGN FLEXIBILITY INTO JOBS AS STANDARD
ASK "WHY NOT" RATHER THAN "WHY"

4.



INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF MANAGERS
PROVIDE THEM WITH PERMISSION AND SUPPORT

5.



COLLECT THE DATA
MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF FLEXIBLE WORKING

1. LEADERS MUST PROVOKE CULTURAL CHANGE: Challenge the status quo

MAKE FLEXIBILITY A STRATEGIC ISSUE

CEOs and leaders must be seen to champion flexible working as they are the ones who set the cultural tone of the organisation. Executives must make it a strategic issue for the whole organisation, and not an issue that is solely for HR to address. A top-down approach will mean that the issue is taken more seriously by managers.

"You need very clear leadership from the top both on the business case as to why we need to do things differently, but also on the broader societal reasons for doing it... This is not just about HR policy, it is about how our culture is changing and leadership has to own that."

David Sproul - Deloitte

"It is about the culture and what people believe the organisation believes in and values. Not what it says it values, but what it really values day to day. You either really mean it and you make it happen, or you don't do it."

Judy Greevy - senior HR consultant

QUESTION CULTURAL NORMS

Cultural norms that are a hangover from old ways of working are one of flexible working's biggest blockers. A leader – at every level in the organisation - must challenge assumptions about the way work is done; from being available to clients 24/7, to holding breakfast meetings and evening-only networking events. It means bravely questioning why things are done the way are, and experimenting with new ideas.

"The issues around workplace cultures and norms – those are the things that have been a drag on our organisation in the past and may have stopped people taking up agile/flexible working roles."

David Sproul - Deloitte

"A lot more can be done in terms of internal meetings. To have an internal meeting at 7am or 8am means you need to have different childcare arrangements and there is no need for everything to be done before breakfast. Why can't it be done at lunchtime?"

Miriam González Durántez - Dechert

CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES

Men must challenge – and be allowed to challenge - the stereotypes that persist, especially at the very senior levels of business. They must step up and show that it's okay to work flexibly to break down out-of-date gender stereotypes and demonstrate that this is an important issue for everyone.

"There is still a perception that people who want to work flexibly are less serious about their careers, particularly men."

Katie McQuaid - Amazon UK

"Unfortunately, there is a generation of leaders in industry who believe that men need to work in a certain way, and that flexible working is frowned upon. We need to normalise that situation... If you have your leaders being open and flexible about how they work, that permeates throughout the organisation."

Karen Blackett - WPP

"The biggest obstacle remains mindset. We need to think in a different way and challenge the way that we have always done things."

Fiona Cannon - Lloyds Banking Group

"The big challenge for people working flexibly are expectations from clients about availability... but lots of roles where traditionally people have said you have to be there all the time, we have discovered that you don't have to be."

James Libson - Mischon de Reya

2. FLEXIBLE WORKING TO BE GENDER NEUTRAL: Emphasise the value of male and female role models

BE A BOLD ROLE MODEL

Male and female leaders must demonstrate their words through their personal actions – they must live what they say. It's about influencing others' behaviour by tweaking the small things, like not sending emails in the evening. These tweaks send out a very strong signal of intent that work is being done differently.

"I share the times when I'm working flexibly so that people can see that I walk the walk, as well as talk the talk."

Emer Timmons - BrightStar

"Encouraging the c-suite to work flexibly is an easier way to start, because then other people don't feel bad about asking for it."

Janvi Patel - Halebury

"Those who are in a leadership position can show that doing things differently doesn't necessarily mean they cannot be done."

Miriam González Durántez - Dechert

MEN NEED TO TALK ABOUT IT

The more men ask for flexibility and shared parental leave, the more it will be normalised and other men will ask for it too. Informal flexibility should not be hidden by men, but talked about openly. Transparency is critical to eliminate the stigma that still surrounds flexibility. Male employees who work flexibly must be used as role models.

"I like to celebrate men who work flexibly, but I think if we can encourage more, that would help promote further change."

Karen Blackett - WPP

"We celebrate and promote people who work flexibly, recognising that there is absolutely no difference between someone who is a mother working three days-a-week, and a father who works term time. Promotion is about ability, not the number of hours you work."

David Sproul - Deloitte

"Agile working is much broader than about professionals who have caring responsibilities, and that is why we have as many stories around people just taking time for themselves as about parents coming back with children."

David Sproul - Deloitte

"There is not as much acceptance around men [working flexibly] and men themselves will often be in denial. I've known men who will pretend to be going to a meeting and actually they are going to pick the kids up."

Judy Greevy - senior HR consultant

USE DIFFERENT ROLE MODELS

While senior male role models for flexible working are absolutely necessary, it is important to celebrate people from every level of an organisation who are choosing to work this way, for whatever reason. At more junior levels, a peer who works flexibly can have more of a positive influence at a daily level than a distant CEO.

"The best way to handle the objection to flexible working in any particular role, is by using a role model. You need a role model at every different level of every different role type because that's what people relate to and think is possible."

Karen Mattison - Timewise

"It's easy to say you support flexible working and then undermine this statement in practice. For example, if all the promotions and best projects go to people working in the office on standard hours, people will rightly interpret that statement isn't worth the paper it's printed on."

Emer Timmons - BrightStar

"Role models are very important for the more junior people in our organisation, seeing their peers or others in more senior positions working an agile pattern and being successful, is very powerful."

David Sproul - Deloitte

3. DESIGN FLEXIBILITY INTO JOBS AS STANDARD: Ask “why not” rather than “why”

MAKE IT THE NEW NORM

While flexible working for parents and carers has become acceptable, in many workplaces it is still seen to be a perk or concession that is made to a particular individual. It needs to be regarded as the norm for everybody. Flexibility – in jobs where it is appropriate for the business – should be an expectation, not an exception.

“You’ve got to get over the phase where flexible working is exceptional. As soon as it is normalised, it becomes so much easier to make sure it is properly implemented.”

James Libson - Mischon de Reya

“The main challenge is that it is regarded as a women’s thing. It is to do with childcare and being seen to be doing special things for special people. It’s not. It’s about having a culture where it is possible for people to work in different ways that is quite acceptable because they are still delivering what you want.”

Judy Greevy - senior HR consultant

SYSTEMISE FLEXIBLE WORKING

An employer should talk about realistic flexibility for every role rather than wait for an individual to ask for it. Working guidelines for line managers should clarify what can be offered informally without the need for formal negotiation. An organisation must allow flexible workers the same opportunities as their full-time counterparts.

“Creating some norms about what should typically be OK in flexible working is important.”

Katie McQuaid - Amazon UK

“This is one of those evolve or die moments for many businesses. The millennial generation now entering the workplace has demonstrated a willingness to vote with their feet when they encounter technology, working practices or both that don’t meet their expectations.”

Emer Timmons - BrightStar

MAKE IT INDIVIDUAL

One size does not fit all. Managers must take an open-minded approach about how every role can be worked flexibly, to understand what the job could look like and what its implications are for the team. If a full-time job is reduced to fewer hours then the job must be designed to take this into account.

“Managers have got to be braver about trying new solutions.”

Cilla Snowball - AMV BBDO

“It has to be about designing flexibility into those jobs - it can’t be fingers crossed and hope for the best.”

Karen Mattison - Timewise

MEASURE BY OUTPUT NOT HOURS

Presenteeism is the enemy of flexibility. Performance must be managed by output not the number of hours someone is in the office. Promotions and bonuses must also be judged by this measure. Employees – especially flexible workers - must not be expected to be responsive 24/7.

“The problem that we have about flexible working is that presenteeism can still be a dominating factor in a number of businesses.”

Karen Blackett - WPP

“Think about what norms you are setting in terms of people being expected to be available 24/7 and what that means... I don’t think leaders communicate what they are expecting and I don’t think employees communicate their concerns about it.”

Katie McQuaid - Amazon UK

4. INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF MANAGERS

Provide them with permission and support

GIVE MANAGERS PERMISSION

A leader must give managers the permission, training and tools to support flexible working. Managers must not be able to blame the system for flexible working failures – they have more control than they think to change the everyday experience of colleagues.

"Leaders need to create the permission, making it clear to managers that [flexible working] is ok. They need to provide the tools for people to be able to work anywhere, any place, any time so that people can focus on their outcomes. When you do see bad behaviours, you have to call it out."

Keith Howells - Mott MacDonald

"Organisations need to give line managers the support. Where we've been most successful, is when we have been able to work across teams to look at the business needs of that particular team, and then look at the agility needs of the individuals so a line manager is not having to deal with it at an individual level - you are dealing with it from a more organisational perspective... If you are a genuine leader, then you always do have more control than you think you've got."

Fiona Cannon - Lloyds Banking Group

CALL OUT WRONG BEHAVIOURS

Managers and leaders who do not support flexible working or who overtly block it, must be called out. Team colleagues who consciously or unconsciously undermine flexible workers must not be allowed to continue doing so.

"The biggest challenge is dinosaur managers. I've been working in this business 40 years and we've always had a contract that says you are going to work 40 hours a week - but how many people actually work 40 hours a week? We don't clock-on and clock-off, so why expect presenteeism? What is it? Why can't we trust people to do what they are supposed to do because that is what it comes back to."

Keith Howells - Mott MacDonald

5. COLLECT THE DATA

Measure the success of flexible working

FIND A WAY TO MEASURE FLEXIBILITY

Find a way to measure formal and informal flexible working at your organisation. Use this data to share best practice across teams and to understand how things can be improved. A fact-based evaluation of performance that does not penalise those who work flexibly is critical.

"If you are working effectively as a flexible worker you may not be physically seen as much as you would do if you were working full-time in the office, but that doesn't mean your results are actually any different."

Katie McQuaid - Amazon UK

SET TARGETS AND TRACK PROGRESS

Setting targets at an organisational level is an excellent way to accelerate behavioural change. Having flexibility as one metric of a line manager's performance review forces individuals to give their attention to the issue and to have conversations with staff that might never have happened previously. Progress against targets can then be tracked to measure success. Track how many flexible working requests are made and how many are turned down. Use this data to track progress across teams; to objectively identify teams that are lagging behind and where potential problems might be hiding.

"One of the reasons we are very keen on targets is that target setting is a fairly provocative process. Some people think they are great, some people think they are terrible. We think targets drive behaviour; it drives action so we have been very clear that we think that this is right for our business as well as our people. We expect every part of our business to be encouraging it... Managers have to take real actions day to day in how they are encouraging people to work. It does take time to build but we expect it to keep building."

David Sproul - Deloitte

ABOUT TIMEWISE:

Timewise works to unlock the flexible jobs market in the UK. We share market insights on flexible working and flexible hiring, deliver training and consultancy to help businesses attract and develop the best talent, and conduct research such as our annual Flexible Jobs Index. We also run Timewise Jobs, a jobs board for roles that are part-time or open to flexibility.

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ABOUT DELOITTE:

Deloitte is a leading global provider of audit and assurance, consulting, financial advisory, risk advisory, tax and related services. In the UK, Deloitte's approach to agile working is founded on three principals – trust and respect, open and honest communication and judging only on output – and enables people to work in ways that benefit both them and the business.

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